
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

MISSION

The Durham Communications Center is dedicated to providing quality emergency call answering and dispatching services. This is achieved in order to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Durham.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Emergency Communications Center, 9-1-1 Center, answers all 9-1-1 calls for Durham City and County. As the backbone of public safety response, the department requires a highly trained professional staff. This department operates under an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Durham and Durham County; whereby the County share of the operational costs is set at 29.2%. Administered by the City, the Center ensures the rapid dispatch of emergency units and helps coordinate communications during disasters and other emergency situations. It is a critical element for ensuring the safety and well being of the community's citizens. The Center provides all citizens of Durham County residing in Verizon telephone service areas, an Enhanced 9-1-1 or E9-1-1 communication systems system with Automatic Number Identification (ANI) and Automatic Location Identification (ALI). The automated services database is maintained by the Communications Center.

Dispatchers elicit necessary information from emergency callers and communicate through the 800 MHz radio system to the appropriate service providers in the City of Durham, Durham County and parts of adjacent counties. A twenty-four (24) hour receiving and dispatching service is provided for Durham City Police Department, Durham City Fire Department, Durham County Sheriff, Volunteer Fire Services (Bahama, Bethesda, Lebanon, Parkwood and Redwood volunteer fire departments), Durham County Emergency Medical Services, Durham County Emergency Management, and Alcoholic Beverage Control. Request for service received for law enforcement assistance outside the City limits are either forwarded, or the information is relayed to the Durham County Sheriff's Department from the 9-1-1 Center.

2003-03 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- EMD implementation will be complete by the end of the fiscal year

- Upgraded 9-1-1 telephone system installed to receive Phase 2 Wireless Information before the end of the fiscal year.
- Priority 1 (emergency) dispatch times will meet or exceed expectations for the fiscal year.
- Priority 2 (high priority) dispatch times will meet or exceed expectations for the fiscal year.
- Priorities 3-7 (routine) dispatch times will meet or exceed expectations for the fiscal year.

2003-04 OBJECTIVES

- Maintain staffing at authorized levels.
- Maintain cost per call at authorized level.
- Continue to work at reduction of complaints received.
- Work to fill vacant positions with bilingual employees.
- Certify the entire supervisory staff as Emergency Number Professionals through the National Emergency Number Association (NENA).

See Special Revenue Funds section of the document for an explanation of the Emergency Services Telephone System fund, which maintains the revenues from the E-911 Surcharge and the Wireless Surcharge.